

Language used by Senator O'Sullivan normalises racism: FECCA

Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) today expressed disappointment at the language used by Nationals Senator Barry O'Sullivan during a Senate estimates hearing in Canberra.

During the hearing, at which the proposed Biosecurity Imports Levy was being discussed, Senator O'Sullivan said "there's a bigger chance of us having a biosecurity breach from some bloody old Chinaman that brings in his favourite sausage down the front of his undies."

FECCA Chairperson Ms Mary Patetsos said language that has a racial element can perpetuate racism within the community.

"Racism continues to be a part of the daily lives of many Australians from diverse backgrounds," she said.

"Speech that has a racial element to it helps perpetuate and normalise racism, and that has a particularly damaging effect when the person using that language is a community leader.

"FECCA encourages Senator O'Sullivan, and indeed all politicians and public figures, to avoid using this type of language in the future."

FECCA is the peak, national body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. FECCA's role is to advocate and promote issues on behalf of its constituency to government, business and the broader community.

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